

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A method for downloading up-to-date versions of selected ~~plurality of different~~ software from a plurality of software vendors over a network and for installing the up-to-date versions of selected ~~plurality of~~ software to a hardware unit, the network comprising a first software handling machine configured to execute a download manager, a second software handling machine configured to execute a download supervisor and a plurality of download servers for downloading the up-to-date versions of selected ~~plurality of~~ software from the plurality of software vendors, the method comprising:

associating, by said download manager, a transaction identifier of the hardware unit with selection data indicating the selected ~~plurality of different~~ software for which said up-to-date versions of selected ~~plurality of~~ software are to be downloaded [[,]] to the hardware unit, wherein the selected different software includes software that were pre-configured into the hardware unit at or before the time of sale of the hardware unit; and further wherein the transaction identifier identifies the hardware unit;

recording said transaction identifier of the hardware unit and said associated selection data in a central database operatively connected to the second software handling machine;

~~said selection data being determined at the time of sale of the hardware unit, and wherein said selected plurality of different software includes a plurality of software that were pre-configured into the hardware unit at or before the time of sale of the hardware unit;~~

sending a download transaction request comprising the transaction identifier of the hardware unit from the download manager to the download supervisor of the second software handling machine;

determining, by the download supervisor of the second software handling machine, the selection data for the hardware unit by looking up the transaction identifier of the hardware unit in the central database; and

responsive to determining, by the download supervisor of the second software handling machine, that the requested download transaction is authorized, performing the steps of:

assembling, by the download supervisor of the second software handling machine, a download/installation instruction comprising up-to-date software access information for the selected ~~plurality of different~~ software indicated by said selection data;

communicating the download/installation instruction from the download supervisor of the second software handling machine to the download manager; and

performing, by the download manager, a download and installation of the up-to-date versions of selected ~~plurality of different~~ software from the plurality of software vendors to the hardware unit pursuant to the download/installation instruction.

Claim 2 (Previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the transaction identifier comprises a serial number of the hardware unit.

Claim 3 (Currently amended): The method of claim 2 wherein the software access information comprises a network address for ~~[[a]]~~ at least one of said plurality of download server servers.

Claim 4 (Currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the first software handling machine comprises the hardware unit, and wherein said selected ~~plurality of different~~ software includes ~~a plurality of~~ software that are added on after the time of sale of the hardware unit.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the download manager executes in a boot sequence of the first software handling machine.

Claim 6 (Original): The method of claim 5, wherein the download manager loads from a removable storage media.

Claim 7 (Original): The method of claim 4, wherein the first software handling machine comprises a personal computer.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the download manager launches from the hardware unit.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): The method of claim 8 wherein the download manager launches in a boot sequence of the hardware unit.

Claim 10 (Previously presented): The method of claim 8 wherein the download manager sends a download transaction request comprising a predetermined selection of software.

Claim 11 (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the hardware unit is linked to the first software handling machine by a dedicated communications link.

Claim 12 (Previously presented): The method of claim 11, wherein the download manager executes upon detecting that the hardware on the dedicated communications link.

Claim 13 (Original): The method of claim 12, wherein the hardware unit is linked to the first software handling machine over a network comprising a local area network.

Claim 14 (Original): The method of claim 12, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

Claim 15 (Canceled)

Claim 16 (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein data comprising the transaction identifier is encrypted.

Claims 17-18 (Canceled)

Claim 19 (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein the selection data is determined in whole or in part in an interactive process.

Claim 20 (Original): The method of claim 19 further comprising obtaining the selection data by a point of sale application.

Claim 21 (Currently amended): The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 20 wherein obtaining the selection data by a point of sale application comprises providing an automated kiosk for selecting software and recording the selections for a download transaction.

Claim 22 (Canceled)

Claim 23 (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein determining whether the download transaction is authorized comprises evaluating the transaction identifier.

Claim 24 (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 further comprising interrogating the hardware unit to obtain information regarding the ~~plurality of~~ software that were pre-configured into the hardware unit at or before the time of sale of the hardware unit.

Claim 25 (Original): The method of claim 24 wherein interrogating the hardware unit to obtain information comprising preexisting software comprises executing a Desktop Management Interface.

Claim 26 (Original): The method of claim 24 further comprising modifying the selection data in response to the information comprising preexisting software.

Claim 27 (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 wherein the software access information comprises a plurality of authentication codes for activating or downloading said up-to-date versions of selected ~~plurality of different~~ software from [[a]] said plurality of software vendors.

Claim 28 (Currently amended): The method of claim 27, wherein the authentication codes are provided by an authentication subsystem of the download supervisor of the second software handling machine.

Claim 29 (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 further comprising storing download transaction data to [[a]] the central database.

Claim 30 (Original): The method of claim 29 wherein the download transaction data comprises a download transaction status.

Claim 31 (Original): The method of claim 29 wherein the download transaction status comprises a transaction hold status.

Claim 32 (Currently amended): The method of claim 31 wherein communicating a download/installation instruction from the download supervisor of the second software handling machine to the download manager is held in abeyance while a transaction is in a hold status.

Claim 33 (Previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the software is data comprising music, images, and video.

Claim 34 (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein the software is data comprising data related to services.

Claim 35 (Currently amended): A system for downloading software to a hardware unit from a plurality of software vendors over a network, the system comprising:

a plurality of software vendor download servers in the network for providing up-to-date versions of selected ~~plurality of~~ software from the plurality of software vendors;

a first software handling machine in the network and linked to the hardware unit, the first software handling machine executing a download manager, the download manager initiating a download/installation transaction comprising selected ~~plurality of~~ software to be downloaded to the hardware unit from one or more of the plurality of download servers, sending a transaction identifier of the hardware unit in a download transaction request to a download supervisor of a second software handling machine over the network, and downloading and installing the selected ~~plurality of~~ software from the plurality of software vendors to the hardware unit pursuant to a download/installation instruction received in response to the download transaction request, said selected ~~plurality of~~ software being determined at the time of sale of the hardware unit, wherein said transaction identifier of the hardware unit are associated with selection data indicating said selected software of which said up-to-date versions of selected software to be downloaded to the hardware unit; and

[[a]] the second software handling machine in the network executing the download supervisor, the download supervisor determining whether the download transaction request is authorized, and, in response to determining that the transaction is authorized, assembling a download/installation instruction comprising up-to-date software access information for the selected ~~plurality of~~ software and to send the download/installation instruction to the download manager; and

a central database operatively connected to the second software handling machine, the central database recording said transaction identifier of the hardware unit and said associated selection data;

wherein the first software handling machine linked to the hardware unit by an external bus, and wherein the download manager executes upon detecting that the hardware unit is linked to the first software handling machine by said external bus.

Claim 36 (Currently amended): The system of claim 35 wherein the software access information comprises a plurality of authentication codes for a plurality of encryption methods to download from [[a]] said plurality of download servers.

Claim 37 (Previously presented): The system of claim 35, wherein the download manager executes on the hardware unit.

Claim 38 (Canceled)

Claim 39 (Currently amended): The system of claim 35, wherein the software access information comprises a plurality of authentication codes to activate for activating ~~a plurality of~~ software and a network address for downloading software from the plurality of download servers.

Claim 40 (Previously presented): The system of claim 35 wherein the software is data comprising music, images, and video.

Claim 41 (Original): The system of claim 35 wherein the software is data comprising data related to services.

Claims 42-52 (Canceled)

Claim 53 (Currently amended): The system of claim 35, further comprising an automated kiosk running a point of sale application for allowing a user to select said ~~plurality of~~ software at the time of sale of the hardware unit, and recording said ~~plurality of~~ software selections to said first software handling machine.

Claim 54 (New): A method for downloading up-to-date versions of selected software from a plurality of software vendors over a network and for installing the up-to-date versions of selected software to a hardware unit, the network comprising a first software handling machine configured to execute a download manager, a second software handling machine configured to

execute a download supervisor and a plurality of download servers for downloading the up-to-date versions of selected software from the plurality of software vendors, the method comprising:

associating, by said download manager, a transaction identifier of the hardware unit with selection data indicating the selected software for which said up-to-date versions of selected software are to be downloaded to the hardware unit, wherein the selected different software includes software that were pre-configured into the hardware unit at or before the time of sale of the hardware unit, and further wherein the transaction identifier identifies the hardware unit;

sending a download transaction request comprising the transaction identifier of the hardware unit from the download manager to the download supervisor of the second software handling machine;

determining, by the download supervisor of the second software handling machine, the selection data;

responsive to determining, by the download supervisor of the second software handling machine, that the requested download transaction is authorized, performing the steps of:

assembling, by the download supervisor of the second software handling machine, a download/installation instruction comprising up-to-date software access information for the selected software indicated by said selection data, wherein said software access information comprises a plurality of authentication codes for activating or downloading said up-to-date versions of selected software from the plurality of software vendors to the hardware unit, the authentication codes provided by an authentication subsystem of said download supervisor of the second software handling machine;

communicating the download/installation instruction from the download supervisor of the second software handling machine to the download manager; and

performing, by the download manager, a download and installation of the up-to-date versions of selected software from the plurality of software vendors to the hardware unit pursuant to the download/installation instruction.

Claim 55 (New): A method for downloading up-to-date versions of selected software from a plurality of software vendors over a network and for installing the up-to-date versions of selected software to a hardware unit, the network comprising a first software handling machine including a point of sale application and configured to execute a download manager, a second software handling machine configured to execute a download supervisor and a plurality of download servers for downloading the up-to-date versions of selected software from the plurality of software vendors, the method comprising:

associating, by said download manager, a transaction identifier of the hardware unit with selection data indicating the selected software for which said up-to-date versions of selected software are to be downloaded to the hardware unit, wherein the selected software includes software that were pre-configured into the hardware unit at or before the time of sale of the hardware unit, and further wherein the transaction identifier identifies the hardware unit;

sending a download transaction request comprising the transaction identifier of the hardware unit from the download manager to the download supervisor of the second software handling machine;

determining, by the point of sale application of the first software handling machine, the selection data;

responsive to determining, by the download supervisor of the second software handling machine, that the requested download transaction is authorized, performing the steps of:

assembling, by the download supervisor of the second software handling machine, a download/installation instruction comprising up-to-date software access information for the selected software indicated by said selection data;

communicating the download/installation instruction from the download supervisor of the second software handling machine to the download manager; and

performing, by the download manager, a download and installation of the up-to-date versions of selected software from the plurality of software vendors to the hardware unit pursuant to the download/installation instruction.